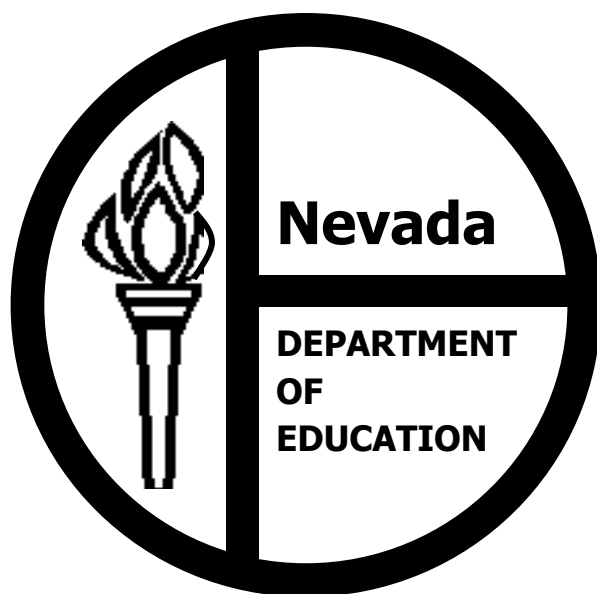


Guidelines for the  
*Nevada Proficiency Examination Program*

*2004-2005*



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# NEVADA PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION PROGRAM

## Overview

This manual summarizes each of the state-required tests and is designed for district test directors, building principals, and school test coordinators to guide decisions about the overall assessment system used at each school.

This manual must be used in conjunction with *Test Security Procedures for Nevada Proficiency Examinations 2004-2005*, as well as *the Document of Appendices 2004-2005*. The *Document of Appendices 2004-2005* contains the relevant sections from Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) that govern the state assessment program. A glossary of selected terms used throughout this manual and *Test Security Procedures for Nevada Proficiency Examinations 2004-2005* can be found in Appendix A of the *Document of Appendices 2004-2005*. Information for private schools and home-schooled students is found in the “Special Considerations” section on page 48 of this manual.

Additional information and guidance for all school personnel directly involved in test administration is contained in manuals that must be used for each test:

- *Nevada High School Proficiency Examination 1998 Series Administration Manual 2005*
- *2004-2005 Nevada High School Proficiency Examination in Writing Administration Manual*
- *2004-2005 Nevada Fourth & Eighth Grade Proficiency Examinations in Writing Administration Manual*
- *Nevada Criterion-Referenced Test Administration Manual 2005 for Tests in Reading and Mathematics*
- *Nevada Criterion-Referenced Test Administration Manual 2005 for the Test in Science*
- *Test Coordinator’s Manual (formerly Supplement to the Guidelines to accompany HSPE 1998 Series tests and CRTs)*
- *Spring 2005 Test Coordinator’s Manual (ITBS/ITED)*
- *ITBS/ITED Directions for Administration*
- *Limited English Proficient (LEP) Student Testing Program, School Year 2004-2005*
- *SCAAN System Manual, August 2004 (electronic format)*
- *Administration and Reporting Guidelines for SCAAN 2004-2005*

Nevada’s system for assessing students, the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program (NPEP), consists of different tests taken by students enrolled in public and charter schools in specific grades and specific programs. NPEP includes the following assessments:

- **High School Proficiency Examination (HSPE) in Reading and Mathematics** in grades 10, 11, 12, and Adult, and **Writing** in grades 11, 12, and Adult
- Writing Assessments in grades 4 and 8
- Norm-Referenced Tests (NRT): **Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)** in grades 4 and 7 and **Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED)** in grade 10
- **Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRT) in Reading and Mathematics** in grades 3-8 <sup>1</sup> and **Science** in grades 5 and 8
- **The Skills and Competencies Alternative Assessment of Nevada (SCAAN)**, (manual and electronic format) in grades 3-8 and grade 10
- **Language Assessment Scales (LAS)** in grades 2-12
- **Pre-Language Assessment Scales (Pre-LAS)** in grades K-1

#### Nevada Proficiency Examination Program Assessment Map 2004-2005

	Standards-Based Testing				Norm-Referenced Testing			
Grade	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>Science</u>	<u>Writing</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Language</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>Science</u>
3	CRT (S)	CRT (S)						
4	CRT (S*)	CRT (S*)		Analytic Traits (S)	ITBS (S)	ITBS (S)	ITBS (S)	ITBS (S)
5	CRT (S)	CRT (S)	CRT (S)					
6	CRT (S*)	CRT (S*)						
7	CRT (S*)	CRT (S*)			ITBS (S)	ITBS (S)	ITBS (S)	ITBS (S)
8	CRT (S)	CRT (S)	CRT (S)	Analytic Traits (S)				
10	HSPE (S)	HSPE (S)			ITED (S)	ITED (S)	ITED (S)	ITED (S)
11	HSPE (S)	HSPE (S)		HSPE – Holistic (F/S)				
12	HSPE (F/S)	HSPE (F/S)		HSPE – Holistic (F/S)				

A full test schedule with test windows for all assessments including *SCAAN* and *LAS* can be found on page 9.

\* Full Census Field-test

F = Fall Testing, S = Spring Testing

**ITBS** = Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, **ITED** = Iowa Tests of Educational Development

**CRT** = Criterion-Referenced Test, **HSPE** = High School Proficiency Examination

This comprehensive series of assessments in various test formats with varying purposes provides opportunities for districts, schools, teachers, students, and parents to assess student achievement in the areas specified by Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS). *The High School Proficiency Examination* (HSPE) tests student achievement and proficiency relative to the 1998 Nevada Content and Performance Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. The HSPE, required for high school graduation, also functions as

<sup>1</sup> Full census field-tests will be conducted for the Reading and Mathematics CRTs in grades 4, 6, and 7 during 2004-2005.



a measure to help ensure that students leave high school with the skills and knowledge necessary for college, careers, and life.

State assessments prior to the HSPE provide objective data that can be used by teachers and students to determine individual progress in essential areas and by schools to identify areas where changes are necessary to improve student learning. If used properly, Nevada's assessment system can help students be better prepared for the HSPE when they reach high school.

Another purpose of the NPEP is to provide accountability to the public and to the Legislature. Test scores from the CRTs, the writing assessments, and the HSPE will be used to determine Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for every public school and charter school as well as for the eight student populations required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

## **General Requirements For NPEP Tests**

### **Who Tests**

All students enrolled in public and charter schools at a grade level where a mandated test is administered statewide must participate in a test administration. It may be possible for private schools to participate in portions of NPEP testing by contacting the Nevada Department of Education, Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum. (Refer to "Private, Exempt, and Other Non-District Affiliated Schools" on page 48 for information on the requirements for participation.) Home-schooled students are not required to take the examinations; however, as a requirement of the Millennium Scholarship Program, home-schooled students must be afforded an opportunity to participate in the HSPE testing if they notify the local school district of their intent to participate.

Because participation rates for students are used to determine AYP, all public and charter schools must submit an answer document for every student enrolled in the grade level being tested whether that student actually tests or not. The information on the demographic page for each answer document must be filled in completely and accurately. If a student is absent or does not participate for another reason, the answer document must be coded appropriately. (See coding information for "Did Not Participate" in Appendix B of the *Document of Appendices* or in the administration manuals for each test.) As part of the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) formula, all schools and each identified population within the school must have at least a 95% participation rate on each state-mandated test. Audits will be conducted to verify the number of students eligible to participate in any specific testing program. For further information on participation rates and use of test scores for AYP purposes, refer to "School Accountability and AYP" on page 10.

Although past state law and regulation allowed exemptions from NPEP participation for students with disabilities and certain students with limited English proficiency, the federal No Child Left Behind Act requires all students enrolled in grades where a state-mandated test is given to participate. State and federal requirements have

been aligned so that **all** students must participate fully and meaningfully in the state assessments. Further information regarding the assessment of students with special needs can be found beginning on page 16 of this manual. **Guidelines for administering each of the NPEP assessments are explicit and must be rigorously followed.**

Students with disabilities and students with limited English language proficiency are to be included in state and district-wide assessment programs. They may use accommodations, if necessary, for test setting, test scheduling, test administration, and response mode. Federal requirements for states are explicit in this regard (34 CFR 300.138). Further guidelines toward providing these accommodations and modifications begin on page 16.

SCAAN is currently the alternate assessment for the state-mandated assessments. It assesses an alternative curriculum based upon functional skill acquisition and basic competence in language arts and mathematics. Requirements for participation in SCAAN may be found in *Administration and Reporting Guidelines for SCAAN*.

### **When Tests Are Given**

The table on page 9 provides information on required tests and administration dates. If a district has special circumstances that prohibit giving the scheduled examination during the designated dates, the district test director must submit a written request for a change of date to the Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum at the Nevada Department of Education at least one month prior to the required date of the test. The ability to grant requests may be limited both by the legislative requirement for uniform statewide administration and by contractual agreements with testing companies for scoring.

Test directors in districts with year-round elementary schools or year-round track schools will continue to work with the NRT (*ITBS* and *ITED*) and writing consultants to schedule appropriate times for administration of required assessments to those students who will be on break throughout the designated testing periods.

### **Who Administers and Where**

Certified school employees must administer each of the tests in the NPEP. Unlicensed personnel, student teachers, substitute teachers, and parent or community volunteers may act only as proctors and not as test administrators. If student teachers, substitute teachers, and parents or community members assist with the administration of the test, they must receive the same training required for school employees. **They are not to be left alone with students who are taking the tests.**

Each test must be given in a school or school district building. Charter schools using on-line coursework as the primary mode of instruction must provide a centralized location for students to appear in person to take the scheduled state-mandated examinations. Any exception to the requirements must be submitted to the Nevada Department of Education in writing no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled administration. The Department will notify the district of the decision in writing no later than one week before the scheduled test date.

## Test Calendar For 2004-2005 School Year

Program	Grade(s)	Testing Window Dates				
CRT's	3-8			March 14-April 14		
CRT – writing	4		Jan 18-27			
	8		Feb 7-17			
HSPE – writing	11	Nov 3		April 6		
	12/Adult	Nov 3	Feb 9	April 6	May 18	July 13
HSPE – reading & math	10			April 4-8		
	11			April 4-8		July 11-15
	12/ Adult	Nov. 1-5	Feb 7-11	April 4-8	May 17-19	July 11-15
ITBS/ITED	4, 7, 10		January 15-February 15			
SCAAN	All eligible students, 3-8, 10		January 15-April 14			
LAS	All eligible students, 2-12		March-May			
NAEP reading, math & science	4, 8, 12 (selected schools)	January 24-March 4, 2005				

**CRT = Criterion-Referenced Tests, ITBS = Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (Grades 4 & 7), ITED = Iowa Tests of Educational Development (Grade 10), HSPE = High School Proficiency Examination, SCAAN = Skills and Competencies Alternative Assessment of Nevada, LAS = Language Assessment Scale, NAEP = National Assessment of Educational Progress**

**Please note that this is the *intended* calendar for the 2004-2005 school year. However, administration schedules are of key concern to the Nevada State Board of Education, and the Department could receive direction to change the administration schedule. If changes occur, school districts will be notified as soon as possible.**

## School Accountability and AYP

Participation and proficiency levels for CRT assessments, the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade writing proficiency tests, and the *HSPE in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing* will be used as the primary indicators of school, district, and state level academic achievement. Test scores on each assessment, except the *HSPE in Reading and Mathematics*, have been divided into four performance levels: *Emergent/Developing*, *Approaches Standard*, *Meets Standard*, and *Exceeds Standard*. A proficient student has been defined as any student who attains the *Meets Standard* or *Exceeds Standard* level.

Grade	Test	Subject	Emergent/ Developing	Approaches Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard
Grade 3	CRT	Reading	100-199	200-299	300-355	356-500
		Math	100-199	200-299	300-354	355-500
Grade 4	Performance	Writing	0-7.5	8-11.5	12-15.5	16-20
Grade 5	CRT	Reading	100-199	200-299	300-384	385-500
		Math	100-100	200-299	300-380	381-500
Grade 8	CRT	Reading	100-199	200-299	300-372	373-500
		Math	100-199	200-299	300-418	419-500
	Performance	Writing	0-7.5	8-11.5	12-15.5	16-20
Grades 10 & 11	HSPE	Reading	100-250		251-500 (Passing)	
		Math	100-289		290-500 (Passing)	
		Writing	0-6.5		7-12.0 (Passing)	

In addition, attendance rates at the elementary and junior high school or middle school levels will be considered in determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). At the high school level, graduation rates will be included in determining AYP. Schools that do not make AYP for two consecutive years will be designated as “In Need of Improvement,” and, as a result, a series of consequences will begin.

Further information on AYP can be found in the *Technical Bulletin* and on the AYP website: [www.doe.nv.gov/nclb/ayp](http://www.doe.nv.gov/nclb/ayp). The website also provides access to the latest state, district, and school profiles.

The Nevada Department of Education is required to report to the Secretary of Education and to the public every two years on the progress of **all students** toward meeting performance goals for assessment, graduation rates, and dropout rates (34 CFR 300.137). Also, the state is required to report to the public on the number and performance rates of children with disabilities participating in regular and alternative assessments in the same frequency and detail as it reports results for non-disabled children. This report must include aggregated data showing participation of children from various groups as well as disaggregated data on the performance of students from each

gender, each ethnic or racial group, students with IEPs and 504 Plans, and those classified as limited English proficient (LEP), low socio-economic status, and migrant (34 CFR 300.139).

The 2003-2004 Reports of Accountability are available online at [www.nevadareportcard.com](http://www.nevadareportcard.com).

### **Reporting Test Results**

State law (NRS 389.015) stipulates reporting requirements for state assessments as follows:

- Not more than 14 working days after the results of the examinations are reported to the Department of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall certify that the results of the examinations have been transmitted to each school district and each charter school. Not more than 10 working days after a school district receives the results of the examinations, the superintendent of each school district shall certify that the results of the examinations have been transmitted to each school within the school district.
- Not more than 15 working days after the school receives the results of the examinations, the principal of each school and the governing body of each charter school shall certify that the results for each student have been provided to the parent or legal guardian of the student.

### **Test Security/Principal Assurance Forms**

Strict adherence to state and district test security plans is essential in order to guarantee the integrity of the NPEP examinations. School personnel involved with the administration of state-mandated tests must carefully review *Test Security Procedures for Nevada Proficiency Examinations 2004-2005*, as well as the district test security plan produced by the local school district. They must also follow all procedures as specified in each examination's administration manual.

In accordance with Nevada Administrative Code (NAC 389.054), the principal of each site where NPEP tests are given is required to accept responsibility for both the proper administration of the tests at that site and the physical security of the test materials including test booklets, prompts, and completed answer documents. The principal must be familiar with the prescribed procedures for administering the tests and certify, on an annual basis, that these procedures will be followed at the school.

The principal is also responsible for **providing complete training annually in test security and test administration** for **all** school personnel. Schools must have a signature sheet indicating that school personnel and any others who assist in any way with test administration of state-mandated tests have been trained on proper administration procedures and security issues. This training must involve more than just giving personnel the test administration manuals to read (see page 6 in *Test Security*

*Procedures for Nevada Proficiency Examinations 2004-2005*). Schools must retain the signature sheets and copies of training materials for a period of two years. District test directors are responsible for making certain that principals have all relevant information and manuals to carry out that responsibility.

In addition to the annual training, training sessions prior to each test administration should focus on security and administration issues relating to the specific test being given. An overview of the important security and administration issues should also be included in these trainings.

**NRS 389.644 requires an annual training on test administration and test security procedures. Everyone involved with testing, including district test directors, principals, school test coordinators, classroom test administrators, and classroom proctors, must be trained so that they fully understand the laws, regulations, and policies governing the state testing program and the contents of the appropriate administration manuals. As outlined in NRS 391.312 and 391.330, failure to follow established procedures may carry stringent sanctions for licensed personnel.**

Principals must complete and submit to the district's test director the form entitled "Authorization to Administer Tests in the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program in Accordance with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC): School Year 2004-2005." These three-part forms (also referred to as *Principal Assurance Forms*) will be mailed to the district test directors in August. Once the principal completes and signs the form, she/he keeps the third (pink) copy and returns the original (white) and second (yellow) copy to the school district test director. The school district keeps the second copy and must return the original to the Office of Assessment, Program Accountability and Curriculum, Room 108, by **September 15, 2004**.

District test directors are responsible for collecting the *Principal Assurance Forms* from the schools and submitting them to the Nevada Department of Education. When sending the forms, the test director is to include a checklist indicating which schools have completed the forms and which schools have not submitted their forms yet. **Regulations prohibit districts from distributing testing materials to schools from which a completed form has not been received.**

Although the principal may choose to assign test scheduling and training responsibilities to a school test coordinator, delegating these duties does not absolve the principal of ultimate responsibility for test security and proper test administration. A list of definitions and responsibilities for school personnel involved in test administration is included in Appendix A of the *Document of Appendices*. Complete information regarding test security and the proper conduct of school officials during test administration is contained in *Test Security Procedures for Nevada Proficiency Examinations 2004-2005*.

## Reporting Test Irregularities

If a school official has reason to believe that a violation of the district or state testing security plan has been committed, NRS 389.628 requires that the violation be reported. The district test security plan will include the method for reporting all instances of test administration and test security violation. **Principals are to inform all school staff of this requirement during the annual training.** All test security violations reported to the district staff must in turn be reported to the Nevada Department of Education. More detailed information on this process can be found in the *Test Security Procedures for Nevada Proficiency Examinations 2004-2005*.

## Coding of Answer Documents

**The principal of each school required to participate in a state-mandated examination is also responsible for making certain that coding of answer documents is done accurately. Because participation rates of students are used to determine AYP, schools must submit an answer sheet for every student enrolled at the grade level being tested** whether that student actually tests or not. The information on the demographic page for each answer document must be filled in completely and accurately. If a student is absent or does not test for any other reason, then the answer document must be coded appropriately using the DNP (Did Not Participate) code. No Child Left Behind requires a 95% participation rate on each state-mandated test for the grade level as a whole and for each specified subpopulation. Audits may be conducted to verify the number of students eligible to participate in any specific testing program. For further information on participation rates and use of test scores for AYP purposes, refer to “School Accountability and AYP” on page 10.

NRS 389.017 mandates that the superintendent of schools of each school district and the governing body of each charter school shall certify that the number of pupils who took the examinations is equal to the number of pupils who are required to take the examinations and who are enrolled in each school in the district or in the charter school.

Significant errors in coding will be treated as irregularities in test administration and must be reported to the Assessment Support for Test Security at the Nevada Department of Education (see page 4).

## Invalidation of Test Scores

Several circumstances may necessitate invalidating a student’s answers and/or scores. Instances of cheating on state-mandated assessments will require that a student’s scores be invalidated. Answer documents may also need to be invalidated if a test administration irregularity or a test security irregularity occurs that affects the validity of the students’ scores. All instances of invalidation require that a Report of Test Irregularity be filed with the Nevada Department of Education. Regardless of the reason for the invalidation, however, **the answer document must be submitted to the appropriate testing company or to the Nevada Department of Education** for inclusion in district and school reports.

Students with invalidated scores resulting from a test administration irregularity caused by a test administration or test security irregularity will be counted as not participating in the assessment, and they will be counted as non-proficient for AYP purposes. **Answer documents for absent students must never be invalidated. Incomplete answer documents should be submitted to the appropriate testing company or the Department of Education for scoring with the completed answer documents. Writing answer documents that have at least one word on them should also be submitted with completed answer documents for scoring. Writing answer documents (for 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade ) that do not have any writing on them but students did complete either the brainstorming and/or the rough draft are to be submitted under a special header sheet.** (See Appendix J in the *Document of Appendices for complete instructions*.)

To indicate that answer documents have been invalidated, the following procedure must be used:

- For the CRTs and the *HSPE in Mathematics* and the *HSPE in Reading*: Mark the invalidation code on the demographic page of the answer document. Submit with the other answer documents to the state's testing company.
- For the *ITBS* and *ITED*: Mark the invalidation code on the demographic page of the answer document. Submit with the other answer documents to Riverside Publishing.
- For any of the writing tests: Separate the tests from the other answer documents and return to the Nevada Department of Education under a separate header sheet. See Appendix J for complete instructions on submitting invalidated student responses for the writing test.

### Preparing Test Materials for Shipment

Although school officials may erase stray marks on completed answer documents, student responses **MUST NOT** be altered. Bubbling of multiple-choice answers is the student's responsibility. **Any item that has an incomplete erasure of a wrong answer will be scored as incorrect. Any item that indicates two possible answers will also be scored as incorrect.**

District test directors must follow directions from the Nevada Department of Education and/or the testing company regarding the receipt and shipment of materials and the reporting of discrepancies in materials received. The following table provides an outline of the sources and destinations for test materials. It is important that completed answer documents be returned to the correct location.



### Sources and Destinations of Testing Materials for the 2004-2005 School Year

Test	Receipt of Test Materials		Shipment of Test Materials		
	Test Booklets, Writing Prompts, and Admin. Manuals	Answer Docs.	Test Booklets or Writing Prompts	Admin. Manuals	Completed Answer Docs.
HSPE Reading/Math/ Grades 10, 11, 12, & Adult	Testing Company	Testing Company	Testing Company	Retain (current school year only)	Testing Company
CRTs	Testing Company	Testing Company	Testing Company	Testing Company	Testing Company
ITBS & ITED	Riverside <sup>1</sup>	Riverside	Retain	Retain	Riverside
HSPE Writing – Grades 11, 12 & Adult	NDE	NDE	Retain <sup>2,3</sup>	Retain (current school year only)	NDE
Writing <sup>3</sup> – Grades 4 & 8	NDE	NDE	Retain <sup>2,3</sup>	Retain (current school year only)	NDE

<sup>1</sup>Although test booklets are retained by the school district (except for large print and Braille booklets), additional booklets can be ordered from Riverside Publishing.

<sup>2</sup>Please note that the instructions for handling writing answer documents for each grade level have changed for this year. Completed high school (HSPE) answer sheets are NOT to be separated prior to shipment, just as answer documents for grades 4 and 8 are to remain intact. Do not separate any answer sheets.

<sup>3</sup>Prompts for the writing tests may be retained by the schools but cannot be released until after the school receives the test results.

Prior to returning completed answer documents to the district personnel, school-level personnel **must check** that all answer documents have been accurately and completely coded. **All demographic information must be provided for every student on each state-mandated examination.** Special attention should be given to the district and school codes on the demographic page as well as to the complete and accurate coding of the information in all sections. Errors in coding this information often result in delays in reporting test scores. Of even more importance is that this information may ultimately have an effect on the school's AYP determination. Coding information is included in Appendix B in the *Document of Appendices* and in the administration manuals for each of the testing programs as is detailed information for providing accurate demographic information.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIALIZED NEEDS

In accordance with state and federal requirements all students must participate in the NPEP. Students with specialized needs may include students identified in need of services in accordance with NRS 388.440 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or students protected from discrimination under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It must be recognized that these are two separate and distinct groups of students with specific rights afforded in accordance with two different federal statutes.

Students who are identified for services under NRS 388.440 and IDEA must meet specific state criteria and must have a current Individualized Educational Program. Students who are afforded accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 must have a current Section 504 Accommodation Plan. Students identified as Gifted and Talented only are not students with Specialized Needs relative to statewide testing.

The following information has been developed to assist school officials in making appropriate decisions related to the participation of all students with specialized needs in NPEP assessments.

### **Students Eligible for Services Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) committee has the authority to determine how a student will participate in the statewide assessment program. The IEP committee may decide that a student with a disability will participate in the state assessment program in one of the following ways:

1. Under standard conditions using no accommodations or using accommodations that do not affect the validity of the assessment<sup>1</sup>;
2. Under non-standard conditions, using testing modifications which change or alter the content or administration of the assessment and invalidate the test result; or
3. Participate in the state's alternate assessment program, the *Skills and Competencies Alternate Assessment of Nevada (SCAAN)*.

Accommodations are designed to improve access to the assessment and its content while maintaining test validity and comparability of scores. Accommodations are variations in the assessment environment or process; including scheduling, setting, administration, and response format.

IEP committees must be familiar with the state's list of accommodations for each

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<sup>1</sup> Any accommodation selected for a student must be written in the student's IEP and should be one that is used during the regular instructional day in the classroom to address an identified need.

state assessment before making decisions regarding how a student will participate in a particular assessment. IEP committees should carefully weigh the consequences associated with the use of accommodations and modifications. Any accommodation selected for a state assessment should be one used during the regular instructional day in the classroom to address a student's identified need. For example, the IEP committee may determine that a student needs a calculator as an accommodation for the math portion of the HSPE. In this example, the student would already be using a calculator in his/her current math class during problem solving exercises. Such an accommodation would be written in the student's IEP under Supplemental Services. There should be no attempt to implement or try accommodations unfamiliar to the student at test time. (See Appendix F for a list of accommodations.)

The IEP committee may consider using an accommodation for an individual student during testing that is not listed on the IEP Accommodation Form. Again, the accommodation should be used during the student's instructional day rather than an attempt to implement a new testing accommodation unfamiliar to the student.

A written request for an accommodation not included on the IEP Accommodation form (see Appendix F) must be submitted to the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum no later than one month prior to the scheduled test date by the school administrator or counselor serving on the IEP committee. Approval may be granted on a case-by-case and test-by-test basis and only if, in the judgment of the NDE, the requested accommodations do not affect the validity of the test. Approval will be given for a specified period of time only. The approval letter, if the accommodation is granted, must be included with the student's IEP. Schools will receive the Department of Education's decision no later than one week prior to the date of the test.

A student may require a test modification to make the testing experience meaningful, even though there are consequences associated with using a test modification. **Testing modifications are changes in the administration and/or content of the assessment that affect the validity of the assessment and the reliability of the results.** Testing modifications alter the scope or content of what is being assessed. When determining AYP or when reporting test performance for IEP students, the scores for IEP students that test using modifications will be invalidated, even though these students will be counted as participating in the test. Clearly, IEP committees must make decisions regarding the use of testing modifications for an individual student with a full understanding of the consequence for the student.

Special education students must take the state-required tests during the same window of administration as all other students. All special education students must take the state tests appropriate for the grade level in which they are enrolled. Additionally, special education students, must be administered all sub-tests of each examination of the *CRTs*, *ITBS/ITED*, and the *HSPE*. Currently, the only deviation from this format is for those students who are participating in the state's alternate assessment, *Skills and*

*Competencies Alternate Assessment of Nevada (SCAAN)*. Information regarding the SCAAN appears on page 19 of this document and in a separate document entitled, *Administration and Reporting Guidelines for SCAAN*.

## **HSPE**

State laws governing participation in the *High School Proficiency Examination (HSPE)* are quite specific. All students seeking a standard high school diploma must take and pass the reading, math and writing tests that comprise the *HSPE*.

For special education students, the IEP committee determines how an individual special education student will participate in the HSPE program. As for all state-required tests, they will choose from the same options as outlined on page 16.

To be counted as passing the test and meeting the graduation requirements associated with the HSPE, a student must be administered the tests using standard conditions or accommodations that do not affect the validity of the assessment. IEP committees must understand the consequences for students and for schools when a decision is made to test using modified conditions or to test using the state's alternate assessment.

Requests for accommodations not listed on the state IEP Accommodation form must be made in writing to the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum, no later than one month prior to the scheduled date of the assessment. A copy of the student's IEP must be included with each request. Approval for such accommodations will be made on a case-by-case and a test-by-test basis and only if, in the judgment of the NDE, the requested accommodation does not affect the validity of the assessment. Approval will be given for a specified period of time only. The written approval, if granted, will be mailed or faxed to the requesting school, no later than one week prior to the HSPE test date.

Decisions regarding a student's participation in the *HSPE* program using the *SCAAN* must be made in accordance with the *Guidelines for Participation in the Skills and Competencies Alternate Assessment of Nevada*. All students, including students with disabilities, are required to participate in the HSPE assessment program beginning in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. All 11th grade students with disabilities entering a district must provide evidence that they have participated in the HSPE program in the 10th grade, or they will be required to participate in the assessment program during their 11th grade year relative to state and federal participation requirements. All assessments, including the *SCAAN*, must be completed within the identified fall and spring testing windows (see page 9).

All students, including special education students, have more than one opportunity to pass the *HSPE* and need to be exposed to the general education curriculum in all subject areas upon which the *HSPE* is based, e.g., reading, writing, and math. The general curriculum for students with disabilities is defined as the same curriculum as the one for non-disabled peers and sets an expectation that students with disabilities will be taught and assessed on grade level content and achievement standards.

## **Alternate Assessment**

The IEP committee determines if a student with a disability will participate in a particular state assessment by taking the state's alternate assessment. The IEP committee must explain in the student's IEP why the general assessment is not appropriate and describe how the student will be assessed. *The Skills and Competencies Alternate Assessment of Nevada (SCAAN)* is the state's alternate assessment for the state CRT, NRT, HSPE, and the state writing assessments. *SCAAN*, a comprehensive measurement of academic and broad functional domains based upon alternate achievement standards, has been developed as a summative measure of language arts and math for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

The criteria that an IEP committee uses to determine if *SCAAN* is appropriate for a particular special education student are found in the *Guidelines for Participation in Skills and Competencies Alternate Assessment of Nevada*. As the IEP committee makes this decision, the consequences of access to standard curriculum, grade promotion, and high school graduation must be considered. If the IEP committee determines that the alternate assessment is the most appropriate way to include a special education student in the statewide assessment program, the *SCAAN* test will be administered at a minimum of two times per year in conjunction with the state CRT, NRT and HSPE, and scores will be reported twice.

All students with disabilities, whether they take the HSPE tests or participate in the HSPE program by taking the *SCAAN*, must be tested beginning in their 10<sup>th</sup> grade year. All 11<sup>th</sup> grade students with disabilities new to a district must provide evidence that they have participated in the HSPE program in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, or they must participate in the assessment program during their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year relative to state and federal participation requirements.

## **Students With a Section 504 Accommodation Plan**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability. A school team, primarily composed of general education staff, determines if a student requires a Section 504 Accommodation Plan. The Accommodation Plan outlines adjustments and/or accommodations to be implemented in the student's school program and during assessments, if necessary.

Students receiving accommodations through a Section 504 Accommodation Plan may participate in the statewide assessment program:

1. Under standard conditions using no accommodations,
2. Or using accommodations that do not affect the validity of the assessment.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Any accommodation selected for a student must be written in the student's Section 504 Accommodation Plan and be one that is used during the regular instructional day in the classroom to address an identified need.

The Section 504 Plan must indicate the accommodation the student needs from the list of accommodations that appear on the state's Section 504 Accommodation form. The Section 504 Accommodation Plan must further indicate the assessment(s) for which the student requires the identified accommodations.

Requests for accommodations not listed on the state's Section 504 Accommodation form must be made in writing, to the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum, no later than one month prior to the scheduled date of the assessment. A copy of the student's Section 504 Accommodation Plan must be included with each request. Approval for such accommodations will be made on a case-by-case and a test-by-test basis and only if, in the judgment of the NDE, the requested accommodation does not affect the validity of the assessment. Approval will be given for a specified period of time only. The written approval, if granted, will be mailed or faxed to the requesting school, no later than one week prior to the date of the test.

NOTE: Section 504 students may not use a calculator on the *HSPE*. NAC 388.0565 allows the use of a calculator on the *HSPE* **only** if a student is enrolled in a program of special education pursuant to NRS 399.440—388.520, inclusive, and his/her individual educational plan specifies that he/she may use a calculator for assessment purposes.

### **Guidelines for Students with Limited English Proficiency**

Federal legislation requires that all limited English proficient students be assessed to determine what they know and can do in academic content areas. Accommodations are available for these students. (See Appendix H for a list of approved accommodations for these students.)

In addition to academic content area tests, during the spring of 2005, the *Language Assessment Scales (LAS)* will be used to determine language proficiency for LEP students in grades 2 through 12, and the *Pre-LAS* will be used for students in kindergarten through first grade. Districts will continue to use the *LAS* for initial placement of students. Schools have the first 30 days of the school year in which to test students using the *LAS*, and new students coming in after that time are to be tested for initial placement within 15 days of their enrollment.

Although LEP students must be assessed in terms of language proficiency according to state and federal statutes, the students' scores on the test used to determine language proficiency, the *Language Assessment Scales (LAS)*, cannot exempt them from taking the required statewide tests. Therefore, **all LEP students, regardless of their English language proficiency level, must participate in the state content tests in reading, mathematics, science, and writing.**

**“Newly arrived” immigrants, those LEP students new to the United States within the past twelve calendar months, must participate on all state academic content area assessments. Although participation is required, performance and**

**participation among this subpopulation are not included when making AYP decisions.**

Decisions to use accommodations on the state academic content area assessments should be made collectively by the student, parents, teacher(s), and school administrator(s) most familiar with the student's English language acquisition. However, each student's file, prior to the administration of the test, should document the student's participation in the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program and any accommodations used. Any accommodations in test administration, test setting, or test scheduling that are made consistent with the student's instructional program **must** be indicated on the form entitled "Proficiency Testing Record for Limited English Proficient Students" in Appendix H of the *Document of Appendices*. This form contains a list of accommodations for LEP students and must be maintained in the student's records.

A written request for other reasonable accommodations that are consistent with accommodations used in the student's instructional program and that do not interfere with the validity of the test must be submitted to the Nevada Department of Education, Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum no later than one month prior to the scheduled test date by a school administrator or counselor. Approval for such accommodations may be granted but only on a case-by-case and test-by-test basis and only if, in the judgment of the Nevada Department of Education, they do not affect the validity and/or reliability of the specific test. Approval will be given for a specified period of time only. The approval, if granted, must be included with the student's records. Schools will receive the Department of Education's decision in writing no later than one week prior to the date of the test.

A limited English proficient student who is **on monitored status does not qualify** to use accommodations of any kind. A student on monitored status must be coded as "LEP" on the answer document. Each student who has been previously identified as LEP, but who has exited that status, will be coded as "Former LEP" on answer documents for any state-mandated content test.

## THE HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION (HSPE)

According to Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS 389.015) and the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC 389), all students in public or charter schools who expect to earn a standard high school diploma must pass the *High School Proficiency Examinations (HSPE) in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing*. Beginning with the graduating **class of 2009**, students must also pass the *HSPE in Science*. This requirement applies to all students including those who attend a charter school, are of limited English proficiency, or are in special education programs. There are no exceptions. Additional information regarding testing requirements for high school graduation is described in NAC 389.011—389.655.

### Tests in the HSPE Program

- ***High School Proficiency Examination in Reading:*** Students will read literary, informational, and functional text and answer up to 70 multiple choice test questions based on the 1998 Nevada State Content Standards. Reading questions focus on word analysis skills, comprehension, and interpretation of these texts at varying levels of cognitive demand.

SCORE RANGES FOR HSPE IN READING	
Non-Proficient	Proficient
100-250	251-500

**Score Needed to Pass: 251**

- ***High School Proficiency Examination in Mathematics:*** Students will answer up to 75 multiple-choice questions based on the 1998 Nevada State Content Standards with specific focus on numbers and operations, algebra and functions, measurement and geometry, and data analysis, interpretation, probability and statistics.

SCORE RANGES FOR HSPE IN MATHEMATICS	
Non-Proficient	Proficient
100-289	290-500:

**Score Needed to Pass: (See below)**

Senate Bill 1, passed by the 19<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the Nevada Legislature in 2003, lowered the passing score on the mathematics test from 304 to 290 for the graduating class of 2003. The Nevada Department of Education was required to adjust the passing score downward and then incrementally raise the score necessary for proficiency to at least 304 effective for the graduating class of 2007. Consequently, the score a student must attain on the mathematics test is determined by the year in which the student entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Students who entered in or before 1998-1999 took the 1994 Series tests and must have a score of 64 or greater to pass the examination.

The chart on the following page lists the required cut scores for each entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade class affected by this legislation.



**Incremental Adjustment to HSPE Mathematics Passing Score**

<b>School Year when the student entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	<b>Original Anticipated Graduation Class</b>	<b>Cut Score (1998 Series Test)</b>
<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>290</b>
<b>2000-2001</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>2001-2002</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>296</b>
<b>2002-2003</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>300</b>
<b>2003-2004</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>304</b>

More detailed information on the *High School Proficiency Examinations in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing* can be found in the *High School Proficiency Review Guide* under State Assessments on the Nevada Department of Education's website ([www.doe.nv.gov](http://www.doe.nv.gov)).

- ***High School Proficiency Examination in Writing:*** Students will write responses to two topics, one narrative or descriptive and one persuasive or expository. Papers are evaluated based on a scoring guide that reflects the 1998 Nevada State Content Standards. Four trained Nevada educators read each paper, two per topic for ideas and content, organization, voice, sentence structure, word choice, and conventions, and each assigns a holistic score to the paper. The two scores for each topic are added together. The total score for the first topic and the total score for the second topic are averaged to obtain the final writing score.

<b>SCORE RANGES FOR HSPE WRITING</b>	
<b>Non-Proficient</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
<b>0-6.5</b>	<b>7-12</b>

**Score Needed to Pass: 7**

- ***1994 Series HSPE in Reading and Mathematics:*** Any student who started ninth grade during the 1998-1999 school year or earlier is eligible to take the 1994 series HSPE tests. The 1994 series tests are similar to the tests described above in construction, but their content is based on the 1994 course of study for the content area tested.

**Scores Needed to Pass: Reading 71; Mathematics 64**

### **Who Tests**

All students in public and charter schools, including LEP students and those with disabilities, must take the tests required by the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program. It is the responsibility of the school and school district to notify both students and parents of the requirements that a student must meet to earn a standard high school diploma.

**Answer documents for *High School Proficiency Tests in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing* have once again been redesigned for the 2004-2005 school year to add information that has not been previously required but is now necessary under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. All unused answer documents from 2003-2004 must be destroyed as they cannot be scored.**

Because participation rates for students are considered in figuring AYP, **public and charter schools must submit an answer document for every student enrolled in the grade level designated for the first administration of the mandated state test (Grade 10 for Reading and Mathematics and Grade 11 for Writing)** whether that student actually tests or not. Schools must also submit an answer document for any Grade 11 student new to Nevada, whether the student actually takes the *HSPE in Reading and/or Mathematics* tests during the first administration in which the student is eligible to participate. If a student new to Nevada enrolls in the school after the November administration of the *HSPE in Writing*, the school must submit an answer document for that student during the April administration of the test whether the student actually tests or not. Answer documents for reclassified sophomores or juniors who took the HSPE the previous year and have passed it are not required. In test administrations that are designed to allow 12<sup>th</sup> grade students and adults an additional opportunity to pass a required HSPE test, only answer documents for those students who test must be submitted.

In all administrations, the information on the demographic page for each answer document must be filled in completely and accurately. No Child Left Behind requires a 95% participation rate on each state-mandated test. If a student is absent or does not test for any other reason, then the answer document must be coded appropriately. For the HSPE content area tests, students who take a test in any HSPE test administration through the April administration of their junior year will be counted toward the required 95% participation rate. Audits may be conducted to verify the number of students eligible to participate in any specific testing program. For further information on participation rates and use of test scores for AYP purposes, refer to “School Accountability and AYP,” page 10.

### **Invalidation of Test Scores**

Occurrences that interfere with the validity of the test scores require that a student’s responses be invalidated. If a student is caught cheating, the student’s test must be invalidated. This student will not count as participating, and the student will be placed in the lowest non-proficient category for AYP purposes. A major testing irregularity whether in administration or security that interferes with the validity of the students’ scores, such as helping students or translating a test into another language, will also require that student test scores be invalidated. All instances of test administration or test security irregularities that result in invalidation of test scores require submission of a Test Irregularity Report.

To invalidate the responses on any examination, use the following procedures:

- *HSPE in Reading and Mathematics*: Mark the invalidation code on the demographic page of the answer document. Submit with the other answer documents to the state’s testing company.

- *HSPE in Writing*: Answer documents for students whose scores must be invalidated must be batched separately from the other answer documents with the exception of IEP students who test using modifications. See Appendix J in the *Document of Appendices* for complete instructions on submitting these documents for scoring.)

**Answer documents for absent students must never be invalidated. Incomplete answer documents must be submitted for scoring with the other answer documents. Follow the instructions provided by each test contractor for submitting incomplete answer documents.**

The Nevada Department of Education will review the number of answer documents invalidated by each school. If a school invalidates a disproportionate number of answer documents, the Nevada Department of Education may audit the school and require explanations for the numbers of invalidated tests. The principal is responsible for making certain that all testing procedures are followed as intended by the law.

### **When To Test**

Testing periods for the *HSPE in Reading and Mathematics* at grades 10 and above are prescribed in state regulations (NAC 389). The Nevada Department of Education establishes the specific dates for administration of the reading and mathematics tests at grades 10 and above and for the writing test at grades 11 and above during each prescribed testing period. The HSPE testing calendar for 2004-2005 can be found on page 27 of this manual.

Examinations in reading and mathematics must be administered at a time chosen by the local school district Monday through Friday of the week in which the writing examination is required except for the optional May administration that may have a reduced testing period. It is permissible to administer the reading test on one day and the mathematics test on a different day. Districts may designate one day, usually Thursday or Friday, during the testing week as a make-up day for the *HSPE in Reading* and/or the *HSPE in Mathematics*. All students in a school who need to take the make-up test(s) must be tested at the same time.

The writing examination **must always be given on Wednesday** of the test week. Writing examinations at grades 11 and 12 must be administered to all students in the district at the same time of day. Any other testing schedule is not authorized. If necessary, a district test director must contact the Nevada Department of Education Writing Assessment Consultant at least one month prior to the scheduled test administration to determine whether an alternate schedule is possible and an alternate prompt necessary.

Adult education students must also take the writing test on the prescribed Wednesday of the testing week. These students must use an alternate prompt. Any other scheduling is not authorized and requests for alternate schedules must be received by the Writing Assessment Consultant no later than one month prior to the scheduled test administration.

To reduce the opportunity for one student to assist another, schedules developed at the district and school levels for regular testing and make-ups must mandate that all students who are taking the reading, mathematics, or writing tests take them at the same time. Whenever possible, large group testing situations should be avoided. Effective monitoring of students in a gymnasium or cafeteria is a difficult task. Use of classrooms for testing is preferable with at least one classroom test administrator and one classroom proctor for each 30 students.

### **Time Required for Testing**

- Additional time in a test-conducive setting **must** be allowed for any student who is working productively at the end of the district-prescribed times.
- Approximately 10-15 minutes for instructions for each test.
- Approximately 90 minutes for most students to complete both sections on the reading test, 90 minutes to complete the mathematics test, and 120 minutes for both topics on the writing test.

At the end of the regularly scheduled testing session, classroom administrators and/or proctors must collect all materials, ask students requiring more time to remain seated, excuse students who have completed the test, and then return materials to the remaining students providing whatever time is necessary for each student to complete the test so long as she/he is working productively. Those students who remain are not to be given a break to leave the room for any reason and return at a later time to complete their test. If possible, it is recommended that students who have completed the test prior to the end of the regularly scheduled time period be excused from the test setting. **Their testing materials must be collected and accounted for before allowing the students to leave the testing room.**

### **Student Eligibility**

The State Board of Education has adopted regulations defining a student's eligibility to take these examinations. District test directors and school district personnel involved with the test administration must be aware of these provisions and must implement them within their districts. Penalties for the unauthorized disclosure of HSPE content, through administration to ineligible students, can be severe. The following table outlines student eligibility, required tests, and testing dates for the 2004-2005 High School Proficiency Examinations.

***Administration of Nevada High School Proficiency Examinations to students NOT eligible to take them constitutes an unauthorized disclosure of test content and is specifically prohibited by state law. (NRS 389.015)***

### High School Proficiency Examinations for School-Year 2004-2005

Grade Level	Eligibility Requirement	Required Tests	When Administered
10	At least 5 completed units of credit	Reading Mathematics	April 4-April 8, 2005
11	At least 11 completed units of credit	Reading Mathematics	April 4-April 8, 2005
		Writing	November 3, 2004 April 6, 2005
12 <sup>1</sup>	At least 17 completed units of credit	Reading Mathematics	November 1-5, 2004 February 7-11, 2005 April 4-April 8, 2005 May 17-19, 2005 July 11-15, 2005
		Writing	November 3, 2004 February 9, 2005 April 6, 2005 May 18, 2005 July 13, 2005
Adult	Students who have enrolled in an adult high school diploma program	Reading Mathematics	November 1-5, 2004 February 7-11, 2005 April 4-April 8, 2005 May 17-19, 2005 July 11-15, 2005
		Writing	November 3, 2004 February 9, 2005 April 6, 2005 May 18, 2005 July 13, 2005

<sup>1</sup>A student who has not yet earned the required number of credits during the junior year to qualify as a senior, and who begins the senior year credit-deficient but who has an academic plan which projects that he/she will graduate from high school within 2 semesters and by his/her regularly scheduled graduation date may submit a written request to the district superintendent to take the exams under the 12<sup>th</sup> grade schedule.

### Procedures for Administering High School Proficiency Examinations

Specific instructions for administering each examination in the HSPE are included in the administration manuals for each test and must be followed exactly. As noted above, these administration manuals are revised each year, and the new manuals must be used. All old administration manuals for the *HSPE* must be destroyed. School officials as well as test administrators, proctors, parents, and any other people who assist with administering the *HSPE* must not examine the contents of any HSPE test (see NRS 389.015). This unauthorized disclosure of test contents is strictly prohibited by state law.

Only those school officials, usually a test administrator or proctor, who have to read sections of a test to a student or those who have to transcribe answers because of a student's disability may have any knowledge of test content. If a school official does have to read sections of a test to a student or transcribe answers, that person must sign a confidentiality form and may not share any of the contents of the test with anyone else. These signed forms should be kept with the student's IEP and/or other records. **See Appendix I for a copy of the Confidentiality Form.**

Complete instructions for administering the *HSPE in Reading, Mathematics and Writing* can be found in the manuals that accompany each test:

- *Nevada High School Proficiency Examinations 1998 Series Administration Manual 2005*
- *Nevada High School Proficiency Examination in Writing Administration Manual 2004-2005*

### **Assistance for Students**

Students are to receive **no help** during the administration of the test beyond making certain that they understand general test directions. No assistance of any kind on individual test items can be given. School officials who participate in any inappropriate assistance to students can face severe consequences including suspension or revocation of teaching licenses. The administration manuals for each of the individual tests contain additional instructions that must be followed by all school personnel and any others who assist with administration of the tests. All test security and test administration procedures must be strictly adhered to.

- Students are not to use calculators on any portion of the *HSPE in Mathematics* unless the student has an IEP that specifies the student's need to use a calculator to provide access to the examination.
- Instructional aids of any kind, unless specified by a student's IEP or included as part of the test, are not allowed.
- Assistance from a test administrator, proctor, aide, other adults, or other students is strictly prohibited.
- Use of dictionaries, including bilingual dictionaries, or any other reference material is not allowed during administration of the test.

### **Need for Remedial Study**

NRS 389.015 states: "If a pupil fails to pass the proficiency examination administered before the completion of grade 11, he must not be graduated until he is able, through remedial study, to pass the proficiency examination." State law requires that remediation must begin after the student has failed a test for the second time. Regulations also require that an individual who needs to take one or more examinations

as an adult must furnish the district or state institution administering the examination evidence of completion of appropriate remedial study. This remedial study must have been completed since last attempting the examination.

### **Ordering Test Materials**

***High School Proficiency Examinations in Reading and Mathematics:*** No later than one month prior to a scheduled test administration, district test directors and private school principals will receive an order form from the state's HSPE testing company for test booklets, answer sheets, and administration manuals. These order forms must be completed and returned by the date indicated on the order form. Districts should order only one answer document per student as the vendor will automatically add an overage amount to the order. NOTE: Test administration manuals are revised annually, and new ones must be ordered each year with the other testing materials. Materials will then be shipped to each district no later than 10 working days prior to the date of the test. If the district does not receive the order form at the specified time, the test director must contact the testing company immediately to arrange for testing materials. If orders are not received within this time frame, it may not be possible to provide the necessary testing materials for that test administration. **Districts should check all testing materials when they receive them. Waiting until the day of the test to open the materials does not allow time to correct possible shipping errors.**

**The state's HSPE testing company will be the source for HSPE testing materials for the Reading and Mathematics tests including Braille and large print versions of those test booklets.**

***High School Proficiency Test in Writing:*** No later than one month prior to each scheduled test administration, district test directors and private school principals will receive an order form from the Nevada Department of Education, Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum, for regular topics, alternate topics, answer documents, and test administration manuals. These order forms must be completed and returned by the date indicated on the order form. NOTE: Test administration manuals are revised annually, and new ones must be ordered each year with other testing materials. These testing materials will then be shipped to each district no later than 10 working days prior to the date of the test. If the district or school does not receive the order form within the specified time frame, the test director must contact the Nevada Department of Education at 775-687-9213 to make arrangements for testing materials. If orders are not received within this time frame, it may not be possible to provide the necessary testing materials for that test administration. **Districts should check all testing materials when they receive them. Waiting until the day of the test to open the materials does not allow time to correct possible shipping errors.**

**The Nevada Department of Education will continue to be the only source for writing assessment materials for all grades tested. 775-687-9213**

## Return of Test Materials

Instructions for returning test documents to the state's HSPE testing company for the reading and mathematics tests and to the Department of Education for the writing test are extremely important as they also assist in making certain that scoring is accomplished in a timely manner and all students are included in the results returned to the district by the testing company and by the Department of Education. It is also important to note that the demographic section of the answer document identifies the **student as well as the district and school to which reports are to be sent.**

**HSPE in Reading and Mathematics:** The state's HSPE testing company will send instructions with the test booklets for return of the completed answer documents and test booklets following administration of the test. Careful batching is important so that scoring and return of reports can be accomplished in a timely manner. **Answer documents must be separated and packed separately from the test booklets before being returned to the test contractor.**

**HSPE in Writing:** All information blocks on ALL pages of the answer document must be filled in to identify the student's writing sample. Without this information, a manual search of answer documents may be required to identify the student, and even a manual search may fail to produce the student's paper. **All parts of the answer document which identify the student, school, or district must be filled in completely and accurately and returned whenever the HSPE in Writing is administered.** Instructions for returning the answer documents to the Nevada Department of Education can be found in Appendix J of the *Document of Appendices*.

Following these instructions is of utmost importance to guarantee that scores are returned in an accurate and timely manner. It is also necessary that all of a student's demographic information be completed accurately so that scores can be accurately disaggregated for schools and for districts.



## WRITING ASSESSMENTS AT GRADES 4 AND 8

### General Information on 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing Assessments

Because participation rates for students are considered in determining AYP, all public schools, including charter schools, must submit an answer sheet for every student enrolled in the grade where the test is to be given whether that student actually tests or not. The information on the demographic page for each answer document must be filled in completely and accurately. If a student is absent or does not test for any other reason, then the answer document must be coded appropriately by completing the DNP section of the demographic information. No Child Left Behind requires a 95% participation rate on each state-mandated test. Audits may be conducted to verify the number of students eligible to participate in any specific testing program. For further information on participation rates and use of test scores for AYP purposes, refer to “School Accountability and AYP” on page 10.

**Answer documents for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing Assignments have been revised to add information that has not been previously required but is now necessary under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. All unused answer documents from previous years must be destroyed. The new answer documents are the only ones that can be submitted for scoring. If old answer documents are used, they cannot be scanned, and students will not receive scores.**

### Invalidation of Test Scores

Instances of cheating on state-mandated assessments will require that a student's responses be invalidated. If a test administration irregularity occurs that interferes with the validity of the student scores, these student papers must also be invalidated. In all instances of invalidation, however, the writing answer document **must** be submitted to the Nevada Department of Education for inclusion in district and school reports. Students who cheat and those students whose papers are invalidated because of a test administration or test security irregularity will not count for participation, and they will not be considered proficient for AYP.

**Answer documents for students who are absent must never be invalidated.** Students who begin a test but do not complete it for any reason should not have their papers invalidated. If a student has at least one word on the answer document, that student's paper should be submitted with the completed answer documents for scoring. See Appendix J in the *Document of Appendices* for instructions on how to handle papers for students who complete only one (8<sup>th</sup> grade test) or two (4<sup>th</sup> grade test) sessions of the test.

If a student's test must be invalidated, that student's answer document must be separated from the other writing answer documents. All answer documents where

responses must be invalidated are to be returned to the Nevada Department of Education in a separate group. See instructions in Appendix J in the *Document of Appendices*.

The principal is responsible for making certain that all testing procedures are followed as intended by the law.

### **Procedures for Administering the Test**

The test administration manual, *“2004-2005 Nevada Fourth and Eighth Grade Proficiency Examinations in Writing Administration Manual,”* contains detailed instructions for the administration of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade writing assessments. District test directors are responsible for providing principals and staff with the manuals so that the test will be administered in the prescribed manner.

All test administrators must use the script provided in the test administration manuals when giving the test. A change in the administration procedure for the Fourth Grade Writing Proficiency Examination involves the brainstorming allowed during the first writing session. Teachers may **NOT** structure their own brainstorming sessions. **This session is now scripted and must be followed by all test administrators.**

All writing assessments are to be given in English. **Prompts may not be translated into another language for any student.**

### **Assistance for Students**

Students are to receive no help during the administration of the test beyond making certain that they understand general test directions. No assistance of any kind can be given. School officials who participate in any inappropriate assistance to students can face severe consequences including suspension and/or revocation of the teaching license. The administration manuals for each of the individual tests contain additional instructions, and the directions for administering the tests must be followed by all school personnel and any others who assist with administration of the tests.

- Instructional aids of any kind, beyond those specified in test administration manuals or approved by a student’s IEP committee, are not allowed during the test.
- Assistance from a test administrator, proctor, aide, other adults, or other students is strictly prohibited.
- Use of specialized dictionaries or any other reference material is not allowed during administration of the test. Explanations of appropriate dictionary usage begin on pages 35 and 36.
- Because this test is an English language assessment, prompts may not be translated into another language by any test administrator, proctor, student, or any other person.

## **Ordering Test Materials**

Districts will receive an order form from the Nevada Department of Education approximately one month prior to the scheduled test date. Test materials will be sent to the districts no later than ten working days prior to the scheduled test date. Each test will have a different prompt, and the prompts for each grade will be printed on different colored paper to minimize any possibility of giving the wrong prompt to the incorrect grade level.

Schools will be provided with both regular and alternate prompts. These prompts may be used only in the following ways:

- Students will use the regular prompt during the two days (8<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing Test) or three days (4<sup>th</sup> Grade Writing Test) established by the district and/or school as the testing period within the state's testing window. Any student who is in school for any part of this testing period will test using the regular prompt. If a student is absent for one or more of the sessions, that student will still use the regular prompt for the test and may continue with the regular prompt if the student returns to school during the time allowed for make-up.
- Students who are absent during the entire testing period but who return to school during the state's testing window (see page 9) may make up the test using the alternate prompt. All guidelines for the return of completed answer documents to the Nevada Department of Education must be followed for all students. (See Appendix J in the *Document of Appendices*.)
- Schools that are not in session during the state's prescribed testing window must use the alternate prompt. The testing window for off-track schools will be established by the district test director in consultation with the Writing Assessment Consultant at the Nevada Department of Education. Please check with the district testing department to determine when testing for off-track schools has been scheduled.

Test administration manuals are revised annually and must be ordered each year with the other testing materials.

## **Invalidation of Test Scores**

Instances of cheating on state-mandated assessments will require that a student's responses be invalidated. If a test administration or test security irregularity such as assisting students or translating the test into another language occurs that interferes with the validity of the student scores, these student papers must also be invalidated. In all instances of invalidation, however, the writing answer document must be submitted to the Nevada Department of Education for inclusion in district and school reports. Students with invalidated scores will not be counted as participating in the assessment, and they will be counted as non-proficient for AYP purposes.

**Answer documents for students who are absent must never be invalidated.** Students who begin a writing test but do not complete it for any reason should not have their papers invalidated. If a student has at least one word on the answer document, that student's paper should be submitted with the completed answer documents for scoring. See Appendix J in the *Document of Appendices* for instructions on how to handle papers for students who complete only one (8<sup>th</sup> grade test) or two (4<sup>th</sup> grade test) sessions of the test.

To indicate that the scores are to be considered invalid, the following procedure must be used. If a student's test is to be invalidated, that student's answer document must be separated from the other writing answer documents. All answer documents where responses must be invalidated are to be returned to the Nevada Department of Education in a separate group. (See instructions in Appendix J.)

### **Preparing Answer Documents for Shipping**

When preparing the answer documents for shipping, please note that **student answer documents for the fourth and eighth grade writing tests must be submitted WITHOUT separating the demographic sheet from the writing sheet.** Answer documents must remain attached so that readers can record their scores on the appropriate student form.

In addition, attention to the following issues will expedite the scoring process for writing examinations and help to ensure the prompt scoring and accurate reporting of test results:

- Make certain that students have used only the new answer documents. Do not submit old answer documents, as they cannot be processed through the scoring program.
- Check that the demographic sheet and the writing sheet **contain the same form number**. If they do not, the scores on the writing sheet will not be matched up with the student listed on the demographic page when the pages are scanned into the scoring program. There may also be no way to locate the scores for that student if the numbers do not match.
- **Use paper clips** and not staples to reattach mistakenly separated forms.
- Check demographic page coding on students' answer documents for name, school number, and district number as well as all other coded information.
- Make certain that information identifying the student, school, and district is filled out on pages other than just the demographic page.
- Separate all invalidated answer documents and fill out a header sheet for the answer documents. Submit them in the same package with the other answer documents.

- Separate all answer documents for students who did not participate on the assessment. Fill out a header sheet for the answer documents. Submit them in a separate group with the rest of the school's answer documents.
- Separate all answer documents for students who were in school and participated in the brainstorming and/or production of the rough draft but who were absent for the final draft (i.e. no words on the answer document.) If a student has even one word on the writing topic page of the answer document, that paper should be submitted with the completed answer documents. **Using a paper clip**, attach the brainstorming and/or the rough draft to the inside of the answer document. Fill out a header sheet for the answer documents. Submit them as a separate group with the rest of the school's answer documents.

Complete instructions for preparing the answer documents for both the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade writing assessments are included in Appendix J in the *Document of Appendices*.

### **Fourth Grade Writing Assessment**

The purpose of the Nevada Proficiency Examination in Writing at grade 4 is to assess the achievement and proficiency of students. It also provides diagnostic information that allows students, teachers, parents, and administrators to focus on specific areas for individual assistance in writing instruction that will lead to practice with and attainment of the statewide writing standards. Scores from this test will be included in school and district AYP reports.

- Number of topics: One
- Length of writing: No more than one page
- Administration: Three writing sessions over two or three days
- Use of a regular dictionary permitted, including a bilingual dictionary if it is a normal part of instructional practice
- Scoring: Analytic trait scoring for Ideas, Organization, Voice, and Conventions
- Proficient: Total score of 12 or more for all four traits

### **Who Tests and When**

All students who are enrolled in a public or charter school at grade 4 are required to take the writing assessment. Students with disabilities and students classified as having limited English proficiency (LEP) must also participate. If necessary, based on a student's IEP, Section 504 Plan, or inclusion in an LEP program, students can receive accommodations that provide access and opportunity to demonstrate achievement. (See section beginning on page 16.) The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires that schools meet a 95% minimum participation rate for each state-mandated test.

Students will take the 4<sup>th</sup> grade writing assessment **January 18-27, 2005**. Districts determine the writing session schedule. However, if two of the three sessions are

scheduled on the same day, a **minimum** 30-minute break between sessions is required. All three sessions should NOT be scheduled on one day.

Because students are given time between writing sessions to allow for consolidation of their ideas in preparation for revision and final editing, the time at which the sessions are administered on the test dates is not critical. It is, however, critical that teachers and classroom test administrators understand that they are **NOT to help** students write to the topic, **NOR** are they allowed to review students' first drafts between the sessions. No adult or other student may provide assistance of any kind. Other than the dictionaries specified on page 35, students are not to be given any materials including a thesaurus or other references that will assist them in writing their essay.

**The brainstorming portion of the test that occurs during Session One is now scripted. All test administrators must follow the script, and no variations from the text are allowed.**

Absent students can make up the test if the make-up can be scheduled before the end of the final week allowed statewide for the testing, i.e., January 27, 2005. All students who did not begin the test during the time other students did may make up the test, but they must use an alternate prompt. If the student misses the last writing session and cannot complete the test before the end of the test window, the first draft MAY NOT be clipped to the answer sheet and submitted in place of a final draft. The answer document for a student who begins the test but does not complete the test will be submitted under a special header sheet. The student's name must be on the first draft and/or brainstorming that must be paper-clipped to the inside of the answer document as proof that the student participated. These papers will not be scored but will be coded so that the student will count as participating. An absent student on the answer document is one who is not in school and does not have an opportunity to begin the test.

### **Time Required for Testing**

- Approximately 15 minutes for demographics and instructions
- Three writing sessions:
  - Session I: prewriting, first draft, revision— approx. 65 minutes
  - Session II: drafting, revision, editing—approx. 50 minutes
  - Session III: revision, editing, final draft, proofreading—approx. 50 minutes

**Any student who is working productively at the end of a scheduled session should be allowed to continue working in a test-conducive environment until completion of that portion of the testing.**

## **Eighth Grade Writing Assessment**

The *Eighth Grade Writing Proficiency Examination* provides administrators, teachers, parents, and students with information about student proficiency in writing. The analytic trait format of the test gives information that will assist with specific guidance

for further writing instruction. Scores from this assessment will be included in school and district accountability reports.

- Number of topics: One
- Length of writing: No more than one page
- Use of a regular dictionary permitted including a bilingual dictionary if it is a part of normal instructional practice
- Administration: Two 35-minute writing sessions
- Scoring: Analytic Trait Scoring for Ideas, Organization, Voice, and Conventions
- Proficient: Total score of 12 or more for all four traits

### **Who Tests and When**

All 8<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in public and charter schools are required to participate in the writing assessment. Students with disabilities and students classified as having limited English proficiency (LEP) must also participate. If necessary, based on either a student's IEP, Section 504 Plan, or inclusion in an LEP program, students can receive accommodations that provide access and opportunity to demonstrate achievement. (See section beginning on page 16.) The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires a 95% participation rate.

Students will take the eighth grade writing assessment from **February 7-17, 2005**. Schools should schedule the assessment during two consecutive days. However, if both sessions are scheduled on the same day, a **minimum** 30-minute break between sessions is required. If a district or school cannot give the test during the prescribed testing period because of extraordinary circumstances, the district test director must contact the Writing Assessment Consultant at the Department of Education to determine an alternate test schedule and to arrange for use of an alternate prompt. Even though students are given time between sessions to reflect on their writing, teachers, classroom test administrators, other adults and students must **NOT** help students write to the topic or review the students' first drafts between sessions. Assistance from any adult or other student must NOT be given during the testing.

Absent students can make up the test if the make-up can be scheduled before the end of the final week allowed statewide for the testing, i.e., February 17, 2005. All students who need to make up the test must use an alternate prompt. If the student misses the last writing session and cannot complete the test before the end of the test window, the first draft MAY NOT be clipped to the answer sheet and submitted in place of a final draft. The answer document for a student who begins the test but does not complete the test will be submitted under a special header sheet (see Appendix J). The student's name must appear on the rough draft and/or brainstorming that is to be paper-clipped to the inside of the answer document as proof that the student participated. These papers will not be scored but will be coded so that the student will count as participating. An absent student on the answer document is one who is not in school and does not have an opportunity to begin the test.

### **Time Required for Testing**

- Approximately 15 minutes for demographics and instructions
- Two writing sessions:
  - Session I: prewriting, first draft, revision—35 minutes
  - Session II: revision, editing, final draft, proofreading—35 minutes

**Any student who is working productively at the end of the established time for the testing session should be allowed to continue working in a test-conducive environment until completion of that portion of the testing.**



## NORM-REFERENCED TESTING (NRT)

As part of the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program (NPEP) and Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 389.015, Nevada students in grades 4, 7, and 10 are administered a norm-referenced test (NRT) to determine their achievement and proficiency in reading, language, math, and science. The *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)* published by the Riverside Publishing Company will be administered to students in grades 4 and 7. Tenth grade students will take Riverside's *Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED)*.

### NRT Tests and Times

The names of the tests required under the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program are preceded by a solid circle.

#### Subtests on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (Grades 4 & 7)

			Number of Questions per Level	
			Grade 4	Grade 7
		Time (min.)		
Reading Total	• Vocabulary	15	34	41
	• Reading Comprehension <sup>3</sup>	25 + 30	41	48
Language Total	• Spelling	12	32	40
	• Capitalization	12	26	32
	• Punctuation	12	26	32
	• Usage and Expression	30	33	40
Math Total	• Math Concepts & Estimation <sup>1</sup>	25 + 5	36	46
	• Math Problem Solving & Data Interp	30	24	30
	• Math Computation	15	27	31
Social Studies		30	34	41
Science	• Science	30	34	41
Maps and Diagrams		30	25	30
Reference Materials		25	30	36
TOTAL:				
Required Tests		241	313	381
		(4 hr., 1 min.)		
Complete Battery		326	402	488
		(5 hr., 26 min.)		

<sup>3</sup> Test is administered in two parts.

**Subtests on the Iowa Tests of Educational Development (Grade 10)**

		Time (min.)	Number of Questions
Reading	• Vocabulary	15	40
Total	• Reading Comprehension	40	44
	Spelling	10	30
Language	• Language: Revising Written Materials	40	56
Math	• Mathematics: Concepts and Problem Solving	40	40
Total	• Math Computation	15	30
	Analysis of Social Studies Materials	40	50
Science	• Analysis of Science Materials	40	48
	Sources of Information	20	40
TOTAL:			
Required Tests		190	258
		(3 hr., 10 min.)	
Complete Battery		260	378
		(4 hr., 20 min.)	

Other tests included in the *ITBS/ITED Complete Battery* may be administered at the option of the local school and/or district. Those tests will be scored and reported at no additional charge by Riverside Publishing Company.

**Who Tests and When**

The *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills* and *Iowa Tests of Educational Development* must be administered to students in grades 4, 7, and 10 using the grade-specific test level. Out-of-level testing is not allowed in any of the examinations under the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program. In accordance with norms group participation, the *ITBS/ITED* testing window (including make-up testing) will extend from January 15 through February 15. Specific instructions for the administration, coding, and shipment of the examinations can be found in the *ITBS Directions for Administration*, *ITED Directions for Administration*, and the *2004-2005 Nevada Guide for Test Coordinators (ITBS/ITED)*.

**Ordering Test Materials**

No later than one month before a scheduled test administration, district test directors and private school principals will receive an order form from Riverside Publishing for additional test booklets, answer sheets, and administration manuals. Districts should order only one answer document per student as extra documents are automatically included in the shipment. The order forms must be completed and returned by the date indicated on the form. Orders will be shipped to the district no later than 10 working days prior to the test date test.

## Accounting for Students Not Tested

**Answer documents for the *Iowa Tests*, both the *ITBS* and the *ITED*, have been redesigned to add information that has not been previously required but is now necessary under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. All unused answer documents from previous years must be destroyed.**

All students, whether or not they participate in the *ITBS/ITED* test administrations, must be accounted for with an answer document. Each school must ensure that an answer document is coded for every student in grades 4, 7, and 10. Proper coding for students who are absent or who participate in an alternate assessment is described in the *2004-2005 Nevada Guide for Test Coordinators (ITBS/ITED)*.

## Preparing Students for Norm-Referenced Tests

In accordance with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 389.640, the Nevada Department of Education will establish a statewide program for use by schools and school districts in their preparation for the norm-referenced tests. The program must be designed to ensure:

- The consistency and uniformity of all materials and other information used in the preparation for the examinations; and
- That the actual examinations are not included within the materials and other information used for preparation.

The law further states that school districts shall comply with this program and may use and provide additional materials and information if the materials and information comply with the established program. Schools, including charter schools, shall use **only** the materials and information that have been approved or provided by the Nevada Department of Education or the local school district.

It is imperative that all educational personnel involved with the teaching or test administration of students in the grade levels to be tested are sufficiently trained and familiar with the information contained in the *Guidelines for the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program 2004-2005* and *Test Security Procedures for Nevada Proficiency Examinations 2004-2005*.

As part of the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program, the following materials are being provided annually for all public school students at the indicated grade levels:

1. *A Message to Parents* (Grades 4, 7, 10)
2. *Practice Tests* (Grade 4)

The pamphlet *A Message to Parents* has been designed to provide students and parents with information about the *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)* for students in grades 4 and 7 and the *Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED)* for students in

grade 10. Sample questions for each of the tests are also included to provide familiarity with the content and format of the actual test questions. *Practice Tests* will be available for students in grade 4 to give an additional opportunity for students to become comfortable with the testing situation. These practice tests are to be administered in their entirety prior to the first testing session.

In addition to adherence to all test security procedures, the following test preparation practices are **approved**:

- Informing teachers about the norm-referenced tests, their purposes, and the use of results.
- Informing students in advance that they will be taking the *ITBS* or *ITED*.
- Explaining the purpose and general form of the *ITBS* or *ITED* to students.
- Familiarizing students with the test format.
- Training students in generic test-taking tips.
- Practicing on tests of similar format, but not content.
- Using publisher-provided practice tests or test-preparation packages with content **not parallel with the *ITBS* or *ITED***.

In order to enhance the accuracy and validity of norm-referenced testing information, the following test preparation practices are **prohibited**:

- Becoming familiar with *ITBS* or *ITED* test questions<sup>4</sup>.
- Narrowing practice or curriculum to specific objectives found on the test.
- Practicing with tests that are highly correlated with the *ITBS* or *ITED*.
- Using test preparation materials that mention the *ITBS* or *ITED* in their titles.
- Using the *ITBS* or *ITED* as a model for constructing exercises that are parallel in content and/or format.
- Doing practice exercises with response options in identical order as the *ITBS* or *ITED*.
- Using a parallel form of the *ITBS* or *ITED*.
- Using practice exercises that contain items from the *ITBS* or *ITED*.

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<sup>4</sup> In accordance with NRS 389.015, the questions contained in state-mandated examinations and the approved answers are confidential, and disclosure is unlawful.

## CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTING (CRT)

Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS 389.550) require that the State Board of Education prescribe examinations that measure the achievement and proficiency of students relative to the standards of content prescribed by the Council to Establish Academic Standards. To fulfill this requirement, the Nevada Department of Education administers criterion-referenced tests (CRTs) in reading and math in grade 3 and reading, math, and science in grades 5 and 8. During the 2003-2004 school year, the Nevada Department of Education expanded the testing program by developing and piloting math and reading tests for grades 4, 6 and 7. During the 2004-2005 school year, all students in grades 4, 6, and 7 will participate in a field test for the reading and math CRTs. In the 2005-2006 school year, the reading and math CRTs in grades 4, 6, and 7 will be fully implemented.

Based on their alignment to Nevada's prioritized Content and Performance Standards, the CRTs are used to classify students as emergent/developing toward the standard, approaching the standard, meeting the standard, or exceeding the standard. Students scoring at or above the meets standard level are considered proficient. Student performance in reading and mathematics is used for calculating AYP.

### CRT Tests

- **Grade 3:** Reading and Mathematics
- **Grades 5 and 8:** Reading, Mathematics, and Science
- **Grades 4, 6, and 7:** Reading and Mathematics (field-tests)

The reading tests measure word analysis, comprehension, and interpretation of literary, informational, and functional texts of varying difficulty. The math tests measure numbers and operations, algebra and patterns, measurement, geometry, and data analysis. The science tests measure physical science, life science, earth/space/environmental science, and science skills, processes and investigations.

Both multiple choice items and constructed response items are included on the CRTs in grades 4 through 8. Each student responds in a written short answer format to between three and five constructed response items per content area to allow for a more complete assessment of the state standards.

Note: Constructed response items differ from performance-based writing prompts in a number of ways. More information on the specific properties of constructed response items can be obtained in the *Nevada Criterion Reference Test Review Guides* and the *2003-2004 Practice for Nevada State Assessment Writing Tasks* that can be accessed on the Nevada Department of Education's website ([www.doe.nv.gov](http://www.doe.nv.gov)).

Information on the CRTs, including sample items, can be found in the Review Guides for Grades 5 and 8 under State Assessments on the Nevada Department of Education's website ([www.doe.nv.gov](http://www.doe.nv.gov)). As new and revised review guides become available, they will be posted to the same website and made available to district offices.

## Who Tests and When

All students in grades 3 through 8 must participate in the spring 2005 CRT administration. This includes all students in grades 4, 6, and 7. Students with disabilities and students classified as limited English proficient (LEP) must also participate in the CRT examinations. If necessary, based on either a student's IEP, Section 504 Plan, or LEP classification, students may receive accommodations that provide better access and opportunity to demonstrate achievement.

CRTs are administered in the spring of the school year from **March 14-April 14** for the 2004-2005 school year. If changes to this testing window are prompted by extraneous circumstance such as multi-track schedules, districts will be notified.

**Because participation rates for students are considered in figuring AYP, schools must submit an answer document for every student enrolled in the school at the required grade level whether that student actually tests or not.** The information on the demographic page for each answer document must be filled in completely and accurately. If a student is absent or does not test for any other reason, then the answer document must be coded appropriately using the DNP (Did Not Participate) box on the demographic page. No Child Left Behind requires a 95% participation rate on each state-mandated test. Audits may be conducted to verify the number of students eligible to participate in any specific testing program. For further information on participation rates and use of test scores for AYP purposes, refer to "School Accountability and AYP" on page 10.

## Time Required for Testing

The following information is provided to assist districts and/or schools in planning their schedules for administering the CRTs. These recommendations provide students an opportunity to concentrate on each test and to demonstrate their knowledge without the fatigue that may accompany taking all three subject area tests on one day.

- Each subject area test (reading, math, and science) should be administered on a different day.
- Each subject area test (reading and math at grades 3, 5, and 8, and science at grades 5 and 8) will require approximately two and one-half hours.
  - For grades 3 and 5, the recommended schedule for each subject area test, reading, math, and science (grade 5 only), is 40 minutes for each of the three sections of each test with a five to ten minute monitored break between sections. Extended breaks like recess and lunch are not allowed.
  - For grade 8, the recommended schedule for each subject area (reading, math, and science) is 60 minutes for each of the two sections of the test with a ten minute monitored break between the sections.

- Students must have at least an additional hour immediately following the regularly scheduled testing time in a test-conducive environment to complete the test if they do not finish within the scheduled time. A short monitored break of no more than five minutes may be provided during this additional hour as needed. If some students still need additional time on the same day, it must be provided.
- All schedules must allow enough time for all sections of each subject area to be completed on the same day.
- When developing the test schedule, administrators must plan the schedule so that lunch and bus schedules will not interfere with students having the amount of time they need to complete the tests.
- The 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grade field-test administrations will take **approximately** 2 hours per subject test. Monitored breaks of five to ten minutes can be provided during the administration of each subject area test.

### **Procedures for Administering CRTs**

A standard set of procedures is described fully in the test coordinator's manual and administration manuals for each CRT grade level test. All steps necessary to ensure the security of the administration and testing materials must be followed. Uniform procedures and protocol can be found in *Test Security Procedures for Nevada Proficiency Examinations 2004-2005*.

Accommodations are available for IEP, Section 504, and LEP students. Information on accommodations and the testing of students with special needs begins on page 16.

Students are to receive no help during the administration of the test beyond making certain that they understand general test directions. No assistance of any kind on individual test items may be given. School officials who participate in any inappropriate assistance to students can face severe consequences. The administration manuals for each of the individual tests contain additional instructions that must be strictly adhered to by all school personnel and any others who assist with administration of the tests.

- Students are not to use calculators on any portion of the Mathematics CRT unless the student has an IEP that specifies the student's need to use a calculator in order to have access to taking the examination.
- Additional instructional aids, beyond those specified in test administration instructions or approved by an IEP committee, cannot be provided to students for use during a test administration.
- Assistance from a test administrator, proctor, aide, other adults, or other students is strictly prohibited.
- No dictionaries or reference materials of any kind are allowed.

## **Invalidation of Scores**

Several circumstances may necessitate invalidating a student's answers and/or scores. Instances of cheating and major test security violations in administration or security, such as assisting students with the test or translating the test into another language, will require that a student's scores be invalidated. In every instance, however, the answer document must be submitted to the appropriate testing company for inclusion in district and school reports. NRS 385.3613 requires for AYP purposes that these students not be counted as participating in the assessment, nor counted as proficient.

**An answer document for an absent student must never be invalidated. Incomplete answer documents should be submitted to the appropriate testing company for scoring with the completed answer documents.**

To indicate that the scores are to be considered invalid, mark the invalidation code on the demographic page of the answer document and submit the answer document to the testing company with the other answer documents from the school.

## **Ordering Test Materials**

No later than one month prior to a scheduled test administration, district test directors will receive an order form from the state's testing company for test booklets, answer documents, and administration manuals. These order forms must be completed and returned by the date indicated on the order form. Materials will then be shipped to each district no later than 10 working days prior to the date of the test. **Schools should check their shipments when they receive them so that adequate time is available to correct shipping errors.**



## **NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)**

NRS 389.012 requires Nevada schools selected by the National Assessment Governing Board and the National Center for Education Statistics to participate in the examinations of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

NAEP, "the Nation's Report Card," is a nationally representative and continuing assessment of what students know and can do in reading, mathematics, science, and writing. NAEP reports state and national results. NAEP does not provide scores for individual students, schools, or districts.

The *national* NAEP assessment reports information for the nation and specific geographic regions of the country. It includes both public and nonpublic school students and reports student achievement at grades 4, 8, and 12. Since 1990, NAEP assessments have been conducted at the *state* level only in grades 4 and 8. Each participating state receives assessment results on student performance as compared to the nation. In its content, the NAEP national and state assessments are identical. Students in grades 4 and 8 take both state and national level tests, while grade 12 students take only NAEP national tests.

In spring 2005, NAEP will assess students' achievement in Mathematics, Reading and Science for grades 4, 8, and 12. Additionally, a small number of students (one or two per group of 30) in each grade and subject will take pilot tests. A total of 119 elementary, 75 middle, and 3 public high schools will be selected. In grades 4 and 8, NAEP will test from 30 to 128 students per school and 3,150 students in each of the three subjects for a total of 18,900 students. NAEP will test between 30 and 135 students in each of the high schools for a total of 305 students for all three subjects. Students will need 90 minutes to complete the tests.

One-half of tested students in grades 4 and 8 will take a hands-on science test. The grade 4 hands-on will take 20 minutes, and the grade 8 hands-on will take 30-minutes. Twelfth grade students will not take a hands-on science test.

A stratified random sample of students is selected that is representative of the racial/ethnic groups and other student populations, such as low socio-economic status, students with disabilities, and limited English proficient students in Nevada.

### **NAEP 2005 Testing and Reporting Schedule**

#### **September - December 2004**

The NAEP State Coordinator will notify and secure participation agreements from selected districts and schools.

#### **January 24, - March 4, 2005**

Nevada students in grades 4, 8, and 12 will test.

#### **Fall 2005 and Fall 2006**

NAEP 2005 Math and Reading results will be released during the fall of 2005.

The Science results will be released in 2006.

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Although Nevada Revised Statutes focus on public school involvement in the state testing program, private school students and home-schooled students, under certain conditions, are allowed to participate in the *High School Proficiency Examinations in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing*. Private, exempt, and other non-district affiliated schools must follow all prescribed test procedures and security measures required of public schools to participate.

### **Private, Exempt, and Other Non-District Affiliated Schools**

Students enrolled in private or exempt schools are not required to take the statewide examinations. However, private and exempt high schools that have been granted a license or recognized as exempt by the Nevada State Board of Education may participate in the *HSPE* due to the requirement that a student must pass these tests to qualify for a state Millennium Scholarship. (Refer to [www.millennium.state.nv.us](http://www.millennium.state.nv.us).)

To participate in any portion of the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program, private, exempt, and other non-district affiliated schools must comply with the following requirements:

- Be in compliance with all Private School statute and administrative code requirements within NRS and NAC Chapter 394.
- Attend the Test Security Training for Private/Exempt Schools—August 18-19, 2004.
- Submit a Test Security Plan to the Nevada Department of Education—October 1, 2004.
- Sign and return the Principal's Assurance Form to the Nevada Department of Education—October 1, 2004.
- Read and follow the guidelines for each test administered within their schools.
- Hold a comprehensive test security training for school personnel administering any of the tests. Hold a refresher training before each individual test for all personnel involved with administering that particular test.

The Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum at the Department of Education will provide three manuals, *Guidelines for the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program 2004-2005*, *Test Security Procedures for Nevada Proficiency Examinations 2004-2005*, and the *Document of Appendices 2004-2005*. These manuals contain information and testing procedures for each of the state tests. Private, exempt, and other non-district affiliated school administrators must read and follow the guidelines for each test administered within their schools. All test

administration and test security guidelines (i.e. dates for testing, eligibility of students, test security, test administration, return of answer documents and test materials as well as instructions for preparing and batching test documents) must be adhered to equally by private, exempt, and other non-district affiliated schools as well as by public and charter schools.

A comprehensive annual training for school personnel administering the test is required so that tests are administered and testing materials are handled in a secure manner. Refer to the individual section for each test in this manual for specific information necessary for administering that test.

If private, exempt, and other non-district affiliated schools meet the requirements listed above, they may test only students who are currently enrolled. Former students who want to take the HSPE must contact the Millennium Scholarship Office. Home schooled students must contact their local public school district to take the test.

Private, exempt, and other non-district affiliated schools may also choose to administer the same norm-referenced tests (*ITBS* and *ITED*) that are provided to the state's public schools. The tests for all grades other than grades 4, 7, and 10 may be purchased from Riverside Publishing Company without prior authorization from the Nevada Department of Education. If a private, exempt, or other non-district affiliated school wishes to purchase the *Iowa Tests* for grades 4, 7, or 10, a school official must contact the NRT Consultant at the Nevada Department of Education (See contact information on page 4) to receive the appropriate security and administration materials. The school will also receive a two-part form entitled "Authorization for Private, Exempt and Non-District Affiliated Schools to Administer Tests in the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program" which must be completed and returned to the Nevada Department of Education before the school will be allowed to purchase the test materials. A copy of this form can be found in Appendix K of the *Document of Appendices*.

Test documents that are not returned on time to the designated testing company (see page 15) may not be scored and may be returned to the school. Scores for private, exempt, and other non-district affiliated school students will be sent to the students' schools along with individual student reports. Private, exempt, and other non-district affiliated schools are responsible for distributing student reports to their students and for reporting student scores on the *HSPE* to the Millennium Scholarship program. Instructions for that reporting will be mailed to each school early in May by the Treasurer's Office.

Private, exempt, and other non-district affiliated schools may lose the privilege of testing their own students if they do not follow the test administration and test security guidelines as established by the testing company and/or the Nevada Department of Education. If the private, exempt, or non-district affiliated school loses its testing privileges, that school will have to make arrangements for its students to test with students in the local public school district or in another private school with state testing privileges.

## **Home-Schooled Students**

Home-schooled students do not participate in any of the NPEP assessments unless required to do so by their home district. However, home-schooled students who are planning to apply for a Millennium Scholarship are required to pass the HSPE.

Home-schooled students who need to take any of the assessments must test when public school students test. A home-schooled student must make arrangements to take the examinations by notifying the district test director at least 30 days prior to the test date to ensure access. To register with the local school district, home-schooled students must fill out the *Registration Form for High School Proficiency Examination*, located in Appendix L of the *Document of Appendices*. Local school districts will receive the scores for home-schooled students. They will then notify those students as well as the Millennium Scholarship Office of the scores. The home-schooled students' scores will be reported separately from the school district's regular student scores and will not be included in the accountability reports for the district.